The Cultural Polity of the Hindus

N.K. Acharya



Surya Prakashan Mandir

SURYA PRAKASHAN MANDIR
Bissan-Ka-Chowk, Bikaner (Raj.)

Price Rs. 16.00

To

My Reverend Teacher
Sri Dinesh Chandra Sukla

SURYA PRAKASHAN MANDIR
Bissan-Ka-Chowk, Bikaner (Raj.)

Price Rs. 16.00

PRINTED IN INDIA AT YUGANTAR PRESS, DELHI-6 AND PUBLISHED BY SURYA PRAKASHAN MANDIR, BISSAN-CHOWK, BIKANER. (RAJASTHAN)

To

My Reverend Teacher
Sri Dinesh Chandra Sukla

FROM THE AUTHOR

I have always been keenly interested in the intellect of Ancient India. The Hindus aspired for a cultural life and developed a system which included practically every aspect of human life. Polity plays a vital role in the social life of the individual. Ancient Indians did know it and, therefore, evolved a system of political philosophy which was based on their cultural ideals. I have attempted to show the undercurrent that established a harmonious relationship between the polity and the cultural ends of the Hindus. Credit of my success goes to my teacher Sri Dinesh Chandra Sukla under whose enlightening guidance I learned history at the lovely University of Jodhpur. Dr. Ramgopal Sharma of the University of Rajasthan also encouraged me suggestively.

I am thankful to my friends Mr. S. P. Bissa and Mr. Dinesh Ranga who chased me to write the book and made necessary arrangements for its publication.

Sutharon ki Bari Guvar,
Bikaner.

Nand Kishore Acharya

CONTENTS

Chapter 1

Structure of Hindu Culture

Structure of Hindu Culture

Culture is a way of life. It encompasses process and goal both. It is concerned primarily with the mental structure of any human being or race than with the physical life—the latter is rather opposite if it is not sanctified by culture. 'Even when a nation or an age,' states Sri Aurobindo, 'has developed in itself knowledge and science and arts, but still in its general outlook, its habits of life and thought is content to be governed not by knowledge and truth and beauty and high ideals of living, but by the gross vital, connercial, economic view of existence, we say that that nation or age may be civilised in a sense, but for all its abundant or even redundant appliances and apparatus of civilisation it is not the realisation or the promise of a cultured humanity.'[1] This passage clearly states what culture generally connotates. It is 'knowledge and truth, and beauty and high ideals of living.' It does not mean negation of material development. The material life will only be subservient to the cause of mental life. What

[1] The Human Cycle, p. 100.

Structure of Hindu Culture

Culture is a way of life. It encompasses process and goal both. It is concerned primarily with the mental structure of any human being or race than with the physical life—the latter is rather opposite if it is not sanctified by culture. 'Even when a nation or an age,' states Sri Aurobindo, 'has developed in itself knowledge and science and arts, but still in its general outlook, its habits of life and thought is content to be governed not by knowledge and truth and beauty and high ideals of living, but by the gross vital, connercial, economic view of existence, we say that that nation or age may be civilised in a sense, but for all its abundant or even redundant appliances and apparatus of civilisation it is not the realisation or the promise of a cultured humanity.'[1] This passage clearly states what culture generally connotates. It is 'knowledge and truth, and beauty and high ideals of living.' It does not mean negation of material development. The material life will only be subservient to the cause of mental life. What

[1] The Human Cycle, p. 100.

significance is to be attached to the physical or the material advancement will depend upon the mental heights a society reaches. Psychologically, culture is attitude towards life--personal or social, whatever it may be. Philosophically, it is the values and ideals humanity aspires for. It is the sensibility of an age or a nation if we employ the language-resister of aesthetics. It is art of life.

The Hindus werea cultural race. 'Knowledge, truth and high ideals' constitute the core of culture. The Hindus were not ignorant of it. They created a wheel of culture that had philosophy at its axis. It is the unique characteristic of the Indian system of thought. '*Brahmavidya Sarvavidya pratistha*' declares Mundanka Upanishad. Kautlya takes philosophy as 'lamp of all the sciences.' But it is not the case with the cultures of other nations. 'In many other countries of the world,' remarks S. Radhakrishnan, 'reflection on the nature of existence is luxry of life.' The serious moments are given to action, while the pursuit of philosophy comes up as a parenthesis. In Ancient India philosophy was not an auxilliary to any other science or art, but always held a prominent position of independence. In the west even in the heyday of its youth, as in the times of Plato and Aristotle, it leaned for support on

some other study, as politics or ethics. It was theology for the middle ages, natural science for Bacon and Newton, history, politics and sociology for the nineteenth century thinkers. In India philosophy stood on its own legs, and all other studies looked to it for inspiration and support. It is the master science guiding other sciences, without which they tend to become empty and foolish.'[2]

The Hindu culture thus depends upon the philosophical speculation of India which is undoubtedly spiritual. It is the spiritual bent of Indian mind that has infused an ever-lasting vitality in the vein of Indian culture. This spiritualism is neither sectarian nor anti-intellectual. Aurobindo considers intellectuality as a chief constituent of Indian mentality. Spiritualism in India is an outcome of the intellectual process which comes to conclude that there must be purpose and unity behind the scene of physical appearance. This spiritual attitude has been unduly emphasized, hence wrongly criticised. Spirituality is not ignorance to reason, it is rather a form of creative intellect crossing beyond the frontiers of reason. Dr. Albert Schweitzer is one of the leading critics who believe that the Hindus

[2] Indian Philosophy, Vol. 1, p. 23.

were merely a spiritual society having nothing to do with practical affairs of social organisation, economy and polity. He stands for the view that the Hindu way of life nagates ethical life and material life.[3] There can be least doubt so far as spiritual attitude of the Hindu mind is concerned, but to consider Hindu culture as negation of life is undoubtedly an improper understanding of the achievements of a race. It needs a comrehensive discussion.

This misunderstanding is a result of a prejudiced conception of spirituality. There is a school of academic thinkers that divides human nature into water-tight compartments and situates these divisions poles apart. Such type of scholars always treat the problem as spiritualism *versus* materialism. Hinduism is beyond such pedantic approach. Hindu culture has an altogether separate story to tell. Spirituality and materialism are not opposite elements to the Hindu mind. They are complementary to each other. The famous sloka, *'Ya devi sarvabhuteshu saktirupen samsthitah'* means that energy in matter is the mother goddess. This sloka is an example of the spirituality of Indian thought that never disregards matter. To Hindu mind matter is the form in which *Brahma*—the abso-

[3] Indian Thought and Its Development, p. 1-2.

lute reality—has manifested Himself. Even this manifestation is property—*dharma*—of *Brahma*. The conception of *Maya* is not only a later development but has often been misinterpreted. The *Brahma*—absolute reality is not a God beyond the creation. He is revealing Himself through the creation. He is energy in matter, hence cannot be separated from the latter. Physical world, therefore, is itself a transformation. It cannot be negated for negation of manifestation would mean negation of the absolute reality. *Brahma* can be known only through its expression. He is revealed in all the things and everything *sarvabhuta* is a part of this absolute reality.

The Hindu mind was not satisfied with the externalised form only. It had a longing for the realisation of the *Sakti* that puts the whole cosmos into action. It witnessed that stream of vitality that gives life to matter and realised the underlying unity which is manifested in various forms. Spiritual attainment means to realise the under-current of the absolute reality and not to ignore the matter. The Hindus, on the other hand, attached a divine significance to the external world. The creation of the world had a divine origin and spiritual purpose to them. Negation of the material world meant negation of this divine purpose which could never be

imagined by the *Rishis* of the Hindus. The conception of *Maya* is to be treated similarly. *Maya* does not hold the world as illusion. It only means that world in its externalised form is not ultimate reality. Hindus believed that there was some thing invisible behind the curtain and to know that was to realise the ultimate truth. The world without this spiritual purpose would only be a struggle with no meaning. But mere spirituality is highly condemned in the *Ishavasyopanishad* by declaring that worship of mere *vidya* makes one enter into the great darkness of ignorance.[4] Matter and spirit are the two aspects of one and the same thing. The *Chandogya* upanishad holds that matter is in no way inferior to God.[5] 'For the upanishads,' says Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, 'both form and matter, the ever active consciousness and the passive non-consciousness, are aspects of a single reality.'[6] Had the Hindus negated matter, they would have placed God in opposition to the former. The

[4] Andham tamah pravishanti
Ye Yeauidyamupasate
Tato bhooya ike tamo
Ya ua uidyam.ratah.

Ishavasyopanishad IV, 9.

[5] Chandogya VI, 8. 4-6.

[6] Indian Philosophy, Vol. I. p. 182.

Hindus did not believe in this dualism which was advocated by Western thinkers like Aristotle who distinguished clearly between 'the first mover and the first matter.' The Hindus believed in the oneness of the universe. The *Ishavasyopanishad* speaks of the divinity of all matter.[7]

The theory of manifestation developed itself into the conception of '*Lila*' when *Brahma* was transformed into the personal God. The creation of the world was considered as *Lila* of the God for his *Ananda*. And it was admittedly the highest purpose for which a *Bhakta* could sacrifice anything. The negation of this purpose—*Lila*—could by no means be allowed by the Hindu thinkers. The externalised form was a symbol of inner energy. Negation of this symbol could not be permitted by a race that adored idols as symbols of the gods. The conception of *Lila*, therefore, sancitified every object of the world and made it possible for everybody to realise the absolute reality through any type of object. There are several stories in the epics and *puranas* which prove that God manifests Himself through any sort of objects. The story of Prahlad is a major example.

---

[7] Ishavasyam idam sarvam
Yatkincha jagatyam jagat.

Ishavasyopanishad, I.

The philosophies of the Saiva and the Sakta sects also support the view that world is not illusory. Saivism takes both matter and soul as eternal. There is a higher life that mankind has to achieve. Philosophy of some modern thinkers like Aurobindo has also been evolved on this groundwork. 'They have no love for God who have no love for all mankind.'[8] The Saiva theory, according to Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, 'does not support the illusory conception of the world. The beginningless *Samsara* is due to matter and souls which are also eternal. The world has a serious moral purpose, and cannot be dismissed as a mere error or jest.' The conception of *Saccidananda* also supports the significance of matter. The absolute reality is *Sat* (existence), *Cit* (consciousness) and *Ananda* (bliss). We shall have to agree that matter is not illusory because it is a form of the absolute reality and it cannot be ignored. Spirituality does not mean renunciation of the matter; it is liberation from the bondage of the former. Aurobindo also conceives the absolute reality in three forms—*Sat*, *Cit*, and *Ananda* and no form—even *Ananda* (bliss) —is in any way superior to any of the other two. The world is not illusion because it is the *Anan-*

[8] Quoted in Siddhanta Dipika, Nov. 1912, p. 239.

danritya (blissful dance) of Siva. Consciousness emerges from matter but it does not annihilates the latter. Sri Aurobindo was one of the scholars who had an insight to look into the deep and wide sea of Indian mind where spirit and matter become one.

It thus becomes clear that the Hindu mind did not disregard matter. But it does not mean that the spiritual values were not the inspiring ideals of the Hindu culture. The first and the foremost place was given to spirituality. Materialism without spiritual refinement degrades the values of higher life and gives rise to missaturation and unrest as can be witnessed in the materially affluent societies of the West. Materialism seeks no greater purpose in life. Morality and ethical ideas are also a form of spirituality. They are product of a higher type of mentality that has affection for all mankind which is undoubtedly a form of spirituality that recognises oneness of humanity. Over-indulgence in material life always hurts the total personality of man. Food in itself cannot be the purpose of life although without it life is not possible. Similarly, life is not possible without matter but matter without the current of vitality in it is of no value. Energy is the chief source of life.

Matter is important for it contains energy. Life is not only matter and man is not a bundle of bones. Life is *Prana* (vitality) and man is *Cit* (consciousness). The everlasting conflict between materialism and the spiritualism is actually a product of the western mind that created a permanent duality between the first mover and the first matter.' 'Let there be light, and there was light, would be strange enough to the ancient Indian mind. God, here, manifested Himself into the light—if we are to employ the same terminology. Hence the God—*Brahma*—and the light—creation—became one.

The Hindus never over-emphasized the importance of spirituality. The literature and the fine arts of the Hindus are enough to supply ample evidence in favour of this thesis. Aurobindo approves of it : 'The symmetric character of Ancient Indian life and the vivid variety of its literature were inconsistent with any exclusive other-worldly direction. The great mass of Sanskrit literature is a literature of human life ; certain philosophic and religious writings are devoted to the withdrawal from it, but even these are not as a rule contemptuous of its values.'[9]

[9] The Foundations of Indian Culture, p. 79 80.

We shall not discuss here the mythological literature of India. It had a religious purpose although a vivid picture of her development in material region is richly drawn there. We shall refer only to two great epics and the works of Kalidasa which by all means represent Indian mentality. Indian life has been elaborately depicted by Valmiki, Vyas and Kalidasa and we find them nowhere standing for the ascetic spiritualism. 'Valmiki, Vyas, and Kalidasa, Sri Aurobindo discusses,' are the essence of the history of ancient; if all else were lost, they would still be its sole and sufficient cultural history. Their poems are types and exponents of three periods in the development of the human soul, types and exponents also of the three great powers which dispute and clash in the imperfect and half formed temprament and harmonise in the formed and perfect. At the same time their works are pictures at once minute and grandiose of three moods of our Aryan civilization, of which the first was predominatingly moral, the second predominatingly intellectual, the third predominatingly material. The fourth power of the soul, the spiritual, which can alone govern and harmonise the others by fusion with them, had not, though it

pervaded and powerfully influenced each successive development, any separate age of predominance, did not like the others possess the whole race with a dominating obsession.'[10]

It is further proved by the aesthetic conception of the Hindus that aims at *ananda*. If the Hindus were believer in the negation of life, they would have produced a literature mainly tragic in tone as has been done by the western literature. Unlike their western fellows, the Hindu creative writers always attempted for a fusion of the two—the spiritual and the material. They did not believe in the eternal conflict between spirit and matter but went further and finally realised their under-lying unity. World, to the Hindus, was not, therefore, a field of struggle. It was *Lilabhoomi*, a source of bliss and not an illusion. This is the reason that the Hindu poets always felt a deep attachment for the beauty of nature which actually was beauty of matter. Why can the material world not be a source of bliss when matter itself is divine? That is why the home-life has always been esteemed highly in the Indian literature. The plays of Kalidasa, who is 'supreme poet of the senses', supply enough evidence to support this

[10] Indian Inheritance, Vol. I, p. 89.

view." The two principles of India are the beneficent tie of home-life on the one hand, and the liberty of the soul abstracted from the world on the other. In the world India is variously connected with many races and many creeds; she cannot reject any of them. But on the alter of devotion (*tapasya*) India sits alone. Kalidasa has shown, both in *Shakuntala* and *Kumarsambhava*, that there is a harmony between these two principles, an easy transition from the one to the other. In his hermitage human boys play with lion cubs, and the hermit-spirit is reconciled with the spirit of the householder. On the foundation of the hermitage of recluses Kalidasa has built the home of the householder.'[11]

Similarly, fine arts like music and dance also supports the aforesaid supposition. Both dance and music have sensuous appeal but the Hindus attached them to divine purpose. Sense is consciousness in matter and the Hindu philosophers aimed at the experience of bliss through it. Music always helps to attain *ananda* through senses. It is going beyond senses with the help of the same. Moreover, Indian music prefers *samvadi svaras* perhaps for the reason that it is

[11] Indian Inheritance, Vol, I. p. 113.

mainly auxilliary to *nritya* which is a form of *yoga.* We have already discussed that the creation of the world has been defined as *anandanritya* of Siva. Dance is a symbol of the realisation of oneness by matter and spirit. It is an embodiment of the oneness of body and soul : 'The first glimpses of the dance are given to us by Siva Himself, the *yogi* of *yogis.* He shows us the cosmic dance and portrays to us the Unity of Being. He demonstrates that the highest *yoga* is in the complete oneness of soul and body, and that this oneness can be attained throngh dance. This is why dance is called *yoga,* for it consists not merely of physical acrobatics but is a means of achieving unity in consciousness."[12]

This conception of *anandanritya* of Siva is a key to understand the Hindu view of life. Dance presents an image of the perfect harmony of the inner spirit and the body in action. It creates a rhythm. This rhythm is the source of all experience in which the significance of the externalised form cannot be lessened. Such a rhythm, therefore, requires some sort of self-discipline. Hence the conception of *rta* gained prominence. And what is needed to the absolute reality is in everyway an essential to the individual. Life is

[12] Indian Inheritance Vol, II, p. 20.

scending the objective world. Sri Aurobindo remarked : 'The intellectuality that predominates is not in any way restless, sceptical, or negative, but it is enormously inquiring and active, accepting the great lines of spiritual, religious, philosophical and social truth that had been discovered and laid down by the past, but eager too to develop, to complete, to know minutely and thoroughly and fix in perfectly established system and detail, to work out all possible branches and ramnifications, to fill the intelligence, the sense, and the life.'[14]

The Hindu spiritualism was thus not an ascetic one. It was the spiritualism with an aesthetic approach. Hence matter was equally important for aesthetics pays no less attention to form or expression. That is why the life was enjoyed with richness and perfection in the Ancient India and we could witness a high cadre of material prosperity with a spiritual bent of mind. Indian culture consists of both the Hellenic and the Hebrew elements or what Mathew Arnold called 'spontaneity of consciousness and strictness of conscience.'[15]

[14] *Ibid*, p. 334.

[15] Culture and Anarchy (Cambridge Paper-back edition) p. 132.

It is this quest for harmonious perfection that inspired Indian mind to evolve a system of four-fold path of life that encircled both the spiritual and the material aspects of life. *Purushartha* theory aims at the realisation of spiritual as well as material values. *Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha* are the ideals a Hindu attempts for. *Moksha*—the final attainment of life is not annihilation. It is spiritual liberation. The Ancient thinkers did not hold it possible for a common man to attain *Moksha*—salvation—without attaining *Kama* and *Artha* within the limit and according to the direction of *Dharma* or righteousness. Every object of the world is, in one way or another, an add to achieve the highest goal—the spiritual liberation. It is, therefore, in no way strange that the Hindus considered *Artha* and *Kama* as two goals of life. This four-fold plan of life is psychologically more inclusive than any other system developed by the intellectual West. Man can live neither by bread alone nor without it. Suppression of senses and desires—*Kama*—is not a healthy tendency, over-endulgence in sensual gratification and a surrender to every desire is also not a choice. It is, therefore, only a disciplined enjoyment of material life that may lead to bliss. It is this discipline—the *Dharma*—that

takes one to spirituality yet not ignoring the pleasures of life. Thus we see that a sense of divine purpose touches the material life of the individual and thereby transforms it.

What is true in philosophy is also true with the life of the individual. It is a chief characteristic of ancient Hindus that they made their philosophical values applicable to the practical affairs of common life. A righteous application of these ideas in daily life is *Dharma.* Dharma is not main power-house of life, it is the regulator that connects human life with the current of spiritual consciousness and controls over the whole machine for proper functioning. "The Dharma, at once religious law of action and deepest law of our nature, is not as in the western code, a creed, cult or ideal inspiring an ethical and social rule, it is the right law of functioning of our life in all its parts. Everything indeed has its *dharma*, its law of life imposed on it by its nature, but for man the *dharma* is the conscious imposition of a rule of ideal living on all his members." It is noteworthy that *dharma* does not see a conflict between the individual and society which had been an essential in the West. Neither it is rigid nor absolute. Within a general framework it is always changing according to

the needs and development of society. A separate *dharma* for every aspect of human life is prescribed but they all have one source. Social code is not suppressing the individuality of one. The individual is granted every freedom that either promotes his cause or does not encroach upon the individuality of others.

Artha and *kama* are two other *purusharthas* a man aspires for. *Artha* means economic prosperity and political power. *Kama* stands for the gratification of senses and a desire for aesthetic life. These aims have not been considered as anti-spiritual by the Hindus; they have accepted these as goals of their life. Man is a unit and all his activities should be coordinating. They should be interindependent leading to harmonious perfection. 'Hinduism' comments Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, 'does not believe in any permanent feud between the human world of natural desires and social aims and spiritual life with its discipline and aspiration on the other.'[16]

A close attention should also be paid to the fact that India did not only worship these ideals but applied them to common and daily life and achieved a lot. All the sacred literature right from the Vedas is an evidence of her higher

[16] The Hindu View of Life, p. 79.

spiritual attainments. Her unique advancement in the arts and literature supplies ample testimonials to prove the richnessof her aesthetic life. And so far as material prosperity is concerned, India in her past reached an excellent watermark hardly attainable in ecnomic and political life of later days. 'Indian culture' to conclude with Sri Aurobindo, 'did not deface nor impoverish the richness of the grand game of human life, it never depressed or mutilated the activities of our nature. On the contrary, subject to a certain principle of harmony and government, it allowed them their full, often their extreme value. Man was allowed to fanthom on his way all experience, to give to his character and action a large rein and heroic proportions, and to fill in life opulently with colour and beauty and enjoyment.'[17]

It was, therefore, consistent with this spirit that Indian mind not only had a quest to know the spiritual reality but developed a comprehensive system of thought that contained all the aspects of human life. Spirituality was the axis of the wheel of Hindu life, *dharma* its ring and *artha* and *kama* its rods. The Hindus discussed every detail of life with a keen insight and a scientific sense of analysis and attached it with

[17] Foundations of Indian Culture, p. 116.

the conception of *dharma*. Whatever they thought or did was always promoting the cause of the soul. Social activities of man were also a step towards spiritual attainment. The political institutions were, therefore, to serve not only material but spiritual purpose as well. Accordingly, polity was also discussed from a cultural point of view.

Polity in Ancient India was thus significantly called *Rajdharma.* It, if otherwise named, had been earnestly linked with the conception of *purushartha. Rajdharma*, was declared basis of all *dharmas*. Even the *asharmadharma* which is individualistic in its character, loses its foundation when the *rajdharma* is voilated.[18] It was called *dandaniti* for its responsibility to maintain the law and order and to promote the welfare of public.[19] Kautlya, like Bhishma, also takes the

[18] Majjetryee dandaniti hatayam
Sarve dharmah praksheyuviruridhah
Sarve dharmasastrama hatah syuh
Kshyatre tyakte rajdharma purane.

Shantiparva 63, 27-28.

[19] Danden Neeyate Chedam
danden nayati va punah
dandanitiriti khyate trillokanabhivartate.

Ibid, 59. 79.

conception of *rajdharma* and that of *dandaniti* as one and the same and appreciates it for the good of the individual and the society both.[20] He names his treatise as *Arthasastra* for it includes not only economy but the methods of gaining and maintenance of the land on which man lives.[21]

Rajdharma was considered as a part of the conception of the whole *dharma*, the former was, therefore, always discussed in the *dharmasastras*. Soon it developed as a completely separate branch of social sciences, but always remained connected with the central conception of *dharma*. In the Vedic literature we find various references of the political ideas and institutions of the ancient Aryans. Bhishma mentions a long list of the political philosophers of the previous times. Shantiparva and some other chapters of

[20] Anvikshyaki tryi vartanam
yogakshyema sadhano dandah
Tasya nitirdandanitih.

Arthasastra 1, 4.

[21] Manusyanam bhoomirarthah
Manusyavati bhoomirarthah
Tasyah privivyah labh palanopayah
Sastramarth sastranitih

Ibid, 1. 5.

the *Mahabharata* present a detailed discussion on polity. *Arthasastra* and *Sukranitisara* are notable scriptures dealing with political institutions. There is a number of other books dealing primarily with polity. It shows the richness of the political discussion of the Hindus. Nowhere *dharma* is lost sight of. Culture is not a separate part of life. It encircles the whole domain of life and no race can claim to be a cultural one until it attains a harmonious perfection consisted of spiritual and material lives both. 'The true nature of the Indian polity can only be realised if we look at it not as a separate thing, a machinery independent of the rest of the mind and life of the people, but as a part of and its relations to the organic totality of the social existence.'[22] There must be an expression of the total personality of an individual or a society in all the external activities. Every activity of man should aim at the central good of life. It has been aptly remarked by Sri Aurobindo.......'there must be......a sound political, economic and social life, a power and efficiency enabling a people to survive, to grow and to more securely towards a collective perfection, and a vital elasticity and responsiveness that will give room

[22] Foundations of Indian Culture, p. 378.

for a constant advance in the outward expression of the mind and the spirit. If a culture does not serve these ends, then there is evidently a defect somewhere either in its essential conceptions or its wholeness or in its application that will seriously detract from its claims to a complete and integral value."[23] Indian culture, no doubt, serve these ends and polity is in no way an exception.

[23] *Ibid*, 365.

Chapter 2

Hindu Conception of State

Hindu Conception of State

State was always a recommendable institution in the political thinking of ancient Hindus. The political philosophers of Hindu India, unlike Western thinkers, never defined it as 'a necessary evil'. Not a slight sense of evil was ever attached to the conception of state. 'Human being can find security only in and through the state. Without a sovereign authority to establish law and order and maintain peace, the stronger will swallow the weaker in the manner of fish.' *Rajdharma* was an aspect of the general conception of *dharma*. Accordingly, the state was considered a political instrument to promote the cause of *dharma*. It was a 'necessary benefactor'.

The state has been treated as an essential for the advancement of the four-fold path of life. Bhishma discusses the significance of state in a high tone. If the law and order are not maintained by the king, the righteousness would soon disappear ; unrighteousness would prevail everywhere. None would care for the code of ethics

and morality. Sense of property and justice would be nowhere. 'Society itself would cease to exist.' 'In the absence of king's protection, all things, filled with fear and anxiety and becoming senseless and uttering cries of misery would be ruined in no time.[1]'

'As, O King,' says Brahaspati, 'all creatures cannot see one another and sink in utter darkness if the sun and the moon do not rise, as fishes in shallow water and birds in a safe place dart and move about as they please (for a time) and repeatedly attack and grind one another with force and then are destroyed so men sink in utter darkness and meet with destruction if they have no king to protect them like a herd of cattle without the herdsman to take care of them.'[2] Even before selecting wife and earning

---

[1] Na uivahah samajo va
Yadi raja no palayeta......
Trastmudvignamhridayam
Hahabhootachetanam
Kshyanena vinashet sarvam
Yadi raja na palayeta.

Shantipava 68. 22 and 24.

[2] Yatha hyanudaye rajan bhootani shashi—
Suryayoh. Andhe tamasi majjeyurapashyantah
Parasparam. Yatha hyandake matsya nira—

(Contd. to be next page)

wealth one should select a king.[3]

The *Ramayana* also discusses the importance of the state for the maintenance of personal and social life. 'The very gods frown over kingless territories. There is no rain and no agriculture. Trade disappears. None can feel secure about his properly or even his life. The very idea of law goes to the winds. Men prey on each other, like fishes from hour to hour. Family life and morality suffer to an extent which is simply horrible. For instance, father and son fight each other, and husbands fail to control their wives. Religious practices decay in a woeful manner.

(*Contd. from previous page*)

Krande vihangamah. Vihareyuyarthakamam
Vihinsantah punah punah.

Vimathyatikrameransch vishahyapi
Parasparam. Abhavamachirenaiva gachheyunartra
Sanshayah. Aivamev vina rajna vinashyeyurimah
Prajah. Andhe tamasi majjeyurgopah
pashavo yatha.

Shantiparva 68, 10-13.

[3] Rajanam prathamam vindet
Tato bharyam tato dhanam.
Rajanyastati lokasya kuto
Bharya Kuto dhanam.

Shantiparva 57. 41.

Brahmanas do not keep their vows. No one performs sacrifices with text and prayer. Sages are not sure of any thing. In short, a kingless realm is perfectly wretched. It can see no happiness, no festivity, no joviality. From such misery, the monarch rescues the people. He is the universal benefactor, father, mother and friend, the hope and mainstay of all, he is the right, he is the truth.'[4]

The Hindu state thus gains a position higher than any other institution for it maintains all the others. No life can be preserved without state. It is of no lesser significance that the institution of state has never been depreciated by the Hindu thinkers. We may fairly compare the Hindu idea of state to that of Hegel, though there remains some minor differences. It is to be discussed somewhere else.

References to both the theories—Social-Contract and the Divine—of the origin of state have been traced out in Sanskrit scriptures. But it seems that only social contract theory could not get hold of the Hindu mind. We find two major references in *Aitereya Brahmana*. The first tells

[4] Book II, Canto lxviii. Quotedin The Theory of Government in Ancient India, p. 69.

us of the fight between the gods and the demons in which the former were defeated. They considered the kinglessness as the cause of their defeat. So they decided to elect a king. Having elected a king, they achieved victory over their rivals.[5] Here the kingship is a result of military necessity legalised by the common consent.[6] The same thought is expressed in an another story referring to Indra's kingship. 'The gods under the headship of Prajapati consulted with one another that the most vigorous and strong Indra should be installed in the kingship for he was the most valiant and the most perfect among them.'[7] Here also the kingship 'originates in election and common consent, based on the possession of the highest qualities by the chosen condidates.[8]

But the *Taitereya Brahman* has a separate story to tell. Here the kingship is sanctified by the divine lustre. Indra is made king by Prajapati. The conception of divine origin thus predominates over that of social contract. It is also supported by *Mahabharata*. Yudhishthira

[5] Aitereya Brahman, I, 1.14.
[6] The Theory of Government in Ancient India, p. 15.
[7] Aitereya Brahman, 8, 4.12
[8] The Vedic Age, p. 430.

is willing to know how did the title of 'Rajan' come into being ? Possessed of physical and mental qualities similar in every respect to the other men, how does he govern the rest of the world ? 'There must be some mighty reason for all this because it is seen that the whole world bows down to one man as to a god.'[9] Bhishma's reply to this question is a blending of both the theories with a predominating tone of the theory of divine origin. 'There was at first no sovereignty, no sovereign, no punishment, no punisher. At that time the people used to govern themselves by means of justice and righteousness. In later times, however, they began to degenerate and were assailed successively by the vices of intoxication, greed, wrath and self-indulgence. The world was disturbed, and thus the Vedas as well as justice perished ; the gods were frightened ; and they sought the protection of Brahma. The great God created for their sake and for the good of the world a gigantic treatise consisting of one thousand chapters which treated the four-fold end of life. This was named '*dandaniti* and became the archetype out of which successive summaries were prepared by the gods, Siva and Indra, and the sages Brahas-

[9] Shantiparva, 59. 5-12.

pati and Sukra. Thereafter the gods approached Vishnu and implored Him to select a person deserving to occupy the highest place among mortals. The great God created by a flat of his will a son out of his lustre. This person, however, did not desire sovereignty and treated his authority as a trust. His fourth successor became skilled in policy and protected the people, while the next gained an empire and became self-indulgent. Then came Vena who was killed by the angry sages for his tyranny. Out of his right arm, pierced by the pious sages, came forth Prithu, handsome, fully armed, skilled in the Vedas and in the science of archery. He was enjoined by the gods and great sages to follow the established laws (*dharma*) without fear or fervour, with strict control over his passions. The gods and the sages moreover proposed to him an oath which he accepted in the following terms. 'I will constantly protect the earth in thought, word and deed, as if it were *Brahaman*; I will carry out the established laws in accordance with *dandaniti*. I will never act capriciously. The twice-born classes shall never be punished by me and the world shall be saved from the intermixture of classes.' Prithu was consecrated by the Brahmins and the sages as

well as by the gods including Vishnu Himself. He was king (*raja*) because all his subjects were gratified (*ranjitah*) by him, and he earned the title of Kshyatriya as he healed the wounds of the Brahmins. The eternal god Vishnu in person established his status by declaring that no one would transcend him.[10]

This passage from Mahabharata attempts to define the character of the Social Contract theory of the Hindus which is in accordance with the main current of Hindu philosophy. It is of special significance that the king was appointed by God with the consent of people. A *dandaniti* was created and Vena, who violated it, was punished. The new king was also appointed by sages and gods both and he also took the oath to carry out the *dharma* in accordance with the *dandaniti.* Then Vishnu declared him supreme. This view is totally different from the theories of origin of the state in Europe. Attention is to be paid to the fact that even the king, who was appointed by gods themselves, could be killed. Such type of theory cannot get any support from the Christian theory of divine origin of state. The

[10] Shantiparva, 59. 13-31.

king, who is a viceroy of divine power neither could be killed nor was supposed to take any oath proposed by people. He could not be compelled to follow the established law. His mood was absolute law. On the other hand, Social Contract theory does not accept any interference from gods. But the Hindu thinkers sanctified the whole matter by introducing divine interference in the process of Social Contract. This divine interposition is a deliberate step of Hindu mind and can be supported by an another story from *Mahabharata*. Bhishma tells Yuddhisthira that in old times 'men dined on one another like fishes in the waters. People made certain pacts among themselves that a man who was harsh speaker, violent, robber, a seducer should be cast off by society. It went for some time but again disorder prevailed. People then went to Brahma to give a king to rule over them. Brahma asked Manu but he did not agree to be a king because 'to govern a kingdom is exceedingly difficult, especially among men who are always deceitful and false in their character.' But people requested Manu and promised him to carry out his orders and to give him tax in

various forms."[11]

Here Manu—the king—is not imposed upon people. He is requested by them. The payment of tax is also promised. Manu thus becomes king on contractual basis while he has also been nominated by Brahma. Free will of men and divine will are thus made one which is a peculiar characteristic of the Hindu mode of thought. This theory is peculiarly Indian in character. It is neither divine nor contractual in the strict European sense of the words. It is the spiritual bent of Indian mind that always sees a divine hand in every aspect of life—political, economic or personal whatsoever it may be. How could the state, which was to have all-prevasive powers over worldly and other-worldly affairs, remain without a spiritual sanctification when every activity of life—even the creation of the world itself—had a divine purpose ?

It is of a great importance to understand the significance of this theory of the origin of the state. It is a key to know the political attitudes of the Hindus. 'Theories of origin' says K. M. Panikkar : are always speculative. They are 'a post facto justifications' of political reality.

[11] Shantiparva, 67, 12-32.

While from the scholastic and academic point of view, their detailed discussion may be important, for a study of the institution of kingship, it is not the theories of the origin which are propounded that are important, but the powers, attributes and functions which they seek to justify or to attack.'[12]

This fusion of the divine and the contract theories of the origin of state empowered the state to exercise totalitarian authority but not in a strict sense. This made the state a representative institution of god as well as of men. The politics was spiritualised. The state came into existence by a joint attempt of divine will and human need and consent. The state thus could exercise its control over material as well as spiritual world. The sphere of the action of the state was not limited to physical affairs—it encircled the metaphysical affairs as well. The fulfilment of three major ends—the fourth *moksha* being an absolutely individual achievement—was primary object of the state. It is this all-pervasive authority that could not allow the state to remain only a negative insti-

[12] The Ideas of Sovereignty and State in Indian Political Thought, p. 36.

tution—a hindrance to hindrances. The state was supposed to have a positive role. 'The state was integrated' remarks Dr. Beniprasad, 'into the vast institutional apparatus for the realisation of the spiritual life, and could not, therefore, be restricted to merely police functions, or the administration of justice. Hindu government could not be merely negative. It had to adopt a positive attitude towards all the main concerns of life—religion, ethics, family, economics, culture etc."[13]

The maintenance of *dharma* thus becomes the principal duty of the state. And *dharma* here is not devoid of *Artha* and *Kama*. We find a list of works to be performed by state which includes all the activities of life. Shantiparva and Arthasastra produce these lists and they have been almost reproduced by all the political thinkers of later periods. Kautlya boldly regulated not only material affairs but the growing tendency towards asceticism. Arthasastra encircles practically all the human affairs within the sphere of state activity. Family-life, asceticism, maintenance of dependents, witchcraft, divorce, rights of women, adultery, prostitution, elope-

[13] Age of Imperial Unity, p. 308.

ment, corruption, inheritance, entertainments and gambling, control of medical profession, craft and merchant guilds, weights and measures, and others are included in the list of state activity. State also started factories.'Kautlya would like an effort to be made to provide work for the poor women whose husbands had gone abroad. The weaving factories should furnish employment for widows, cripple women, women condemned to pay fines, and reclaimed prostitutes.'[14] Similarly, the state had control over economy through license, price fixation and taxation. A humanitarian point of view predominates the state-policy regarding liquor, animal slaughter etc. The state also performed welfare works like meteorological guidance, irrigation, clearing forests and valleys, famine relief, aids against pestilence, floods and other calamities like rats, snakes, fire etc. Kautlya also attempted to promote social helpfulness. Regulation of begging and borrowing corn was also tried. The state was thus not meant to administer justice; it had a positive attitude aiming at the general welfare of the public. A similar list consisting of the state activity is found in Mahabharata. The state should have a control over the elements that

[14] Arthasastra, 208.

could prove to be harmful to the law. Maintenance of law and order is the main function of the state. It should, in addition, also promote the material interests of the subjects. Government was supposed to provide all the facilities of agriculture. Tanks and lakes should be constructed to face the famine. The land should be made suitable to cultivation. The state was supposed to provide loans for seeds or food. Medical facilities were also to be given against diseases and other destructive beings. The king Prithu himself removed the rocks etc. and set the surface of the land to be cultivated. Arrangements for communication were also to be managed by the state. People should be defended from thieves and robbers. Begging should be regulated.

The state thus was an instrument in upholding *dharma* and promoting *artha* and *kama.* Dr. Beniprasad has aptly remarked that the Hindu state 'was generally alive to some vital interests of the people. It encouraged agriculture and looked after irrigation. It stepped in to save the consumer from exorbitant profiteering and allowed all classes of craftsmen to band together. It cared for the means of communication and had no small share in promoting the homo-

geneity of culture throughout the country. The rulers often provided for the comforts of travellers and sick people and showed unstained generosity to the poor people. The Hindu courts favoured poets and scholars and donated lavishly to academics and universities which won the enthusiastic admiration of the Chinese scholars. The Hindu state succeeded in maintaining conditions favourable to the rise of the systems of philosophy which, in certain aspects, touch the sublime heights, and literature which ranks among the great literature of the world. Sometimes the state directly took lead in moral and religious reform. Under Ashoka and Kanishka it helped to transform the higher life of India and transmitted to the Far East a gospel which still warms and illumines its spiritual life."[15]

The promotion of spiritual as well as material interests of people was thus expected from the state. State thus worked for the fulfilment of the ideals of Indian culture. The theory of oneness or the absolute reality also influenced the polity of the Hindus. The conception of *Sarvabhauma rajya* and *Sarvabhauma raja* was

[15] The State in Ancient India, p. 513.

undoubtedly the political manifestation of the conception of *Sarvabhauma atma.* We find the traces of the development of the imperial idea from Rigveda. It is a testimony to the developing political thinking of the Hindus for such a clear and systematic conception of Imperialism is found nowhere in the contemporary world. The word *'samrajya* has been found in Rigveda.[16] The universal ruler has been called *Ekrat, Rajadhiraja, Sarvabhauma* etc. in ancient literature. Among other words used in the Sanskrit literature for paramount sovereignty some are—*rajaraja, visvarat* and *chakravrati.* Moreover, the Hindu political thinkers were aware of the possibility of the king being too ambitious. They, therefore, attempted to have a control over the ambitions of king. Hence the concept of *digvijaya* was associated with the idea of *dharma* and performance of *yajna.*

Aitreya Brahman clearly states that a *Vijigishu* king, who desires to be paramount sovereign by ruling the land upto seas, must perform *'Aindra-mahabhisheka yajna.*[17]

Satpatha Brahman says that by performing

[16] Rigveda, 1.25.10.

[17] Aitreya Brahman, 39.

the *rajsuya* one becomes king, and by *vajpeya* (he) becomes emperor (*samrat*) and the office of the king is lower and that of the emperor higher.[18] Some other authorities take the *vajapeya* a preceding to *rajsuya*.[19] But it shows that *dharma* was a superiority over the state. Accordingly the conquest was classified in three categories—*dharmavijay*, *lobhvijaya* and *asurijaya*.[20] The *asurvijayee* was one who slained the defeated king and his relatives and annexed the territory, the *lobhvijayee* was satisfied by getting money. The *dharmavijayee* needed only the formal acceptance of his paramouncy. The last one was naturally considered to be the best. Moreover, the *yajna* is a symbol of the offering of one's possessions to dharma and gods and the performance of *Asvamedha*, *Vajapeya*, *rajasuya* etc. meant that the king had dedicated his empire to the *dharma* and the gods. The king thus could work only as trustee and his foremost duty was to work for the achievement of the goals of the state. The state thus was not an instrument for the gratifications of king's personal ambitions. It was to promote *dharma* and

[18] Satapatha Brahman, 5.1.1.13.

[19] Asvalayana Sravta Sutra, 9.9.19.

[20] Arthasastra, 12.1.

tarian interference in the political set-up and working of the state. Their officials were granted absolute freedom to worship. The kings themselves, many times, gave charity and donations to various other sects. Emperor Samudragupta entrusted the education of his son to Vashubandhu who was a famous and erudite Buddhist scholar. Assignment of all-pervading functions to the state has given rise to an illusive conception. A number of modern scholars infer from the all-pervasive idea of *dharma* that the Hindu state was not secular, it was a theocratic one. As a matter of fact, the Hindu state was neither secular nor theocratic in strict sense of the word. It was cultural and spiritual. If secular means pertaining to earthly matters it was secular but it was not if secularism is restricted only to earthly matters because it aimed at spiritual ends as well and made best efforts for the spiritual advancement of its subjects. But if secular means free from sectarian influence we may call it secular. The Hindu state was not meant to propagate any particular sect. All the sects were considered equal in the eyes of the state. Religion of the king was not religion of his subjects and no distinction was

made in administration of justice and economy as was done in Islamic and Christian states. We find various examples when king of one sect appointed the men of other sects to the posts of higher responsibility. All the sects were granted charity by the king. The Mauryan and the Gupta states could exemplify it well. Ashoka's personal faith was Bauddhism but it was not state-religion. The subjects of the state were neither forced to accept the religion of *Sakyamuni* nor treated inferior to the followers of Buddhism in taxation or administration of justice. The premier of Bauddha Samgha was not supposed to recognize the kingship of Ashoka or any king as the *Khalifas* and Popes did in the Islamic and Christian countries. A king was strict follower of the Vedic religion but his sisters, daughters and daughters-in-law were all Buddhists. Some of them, however, had given donations to Brahmans as well. In the Kadamba family, kings Krishna-verman and Mrigesa-verman performed *Asvamedha* sacrifice out of their respect for the Vedic religion, and made grants to a Jain establishment out of their reverence for Mahavira. There are many records in our period which show that the Jains used to respect the Hindus and their teachers.

The Guptas were orthodox Hindus, but the best tribute to their administration has been paid by some contemporary Jain records. It is well-known how the Buddhist University at Nalanda owed most of its prosperity to the patronage it received from the Hindu Gupta Emperors. Among the latter's officers also there were some who were Buddhists, and one of them is seen making a donation to the Buddhist establishment at Sanchi for the spiritual benefit of his Vaishnava sovereign Chandragupta II.'[21]

It thus becomes clear that the king was not treated as religious head in Hindu political thoughts. The state was meant for the promotion of the interests of the people not for the propaganda of the religion of the kings. Similarly the idea of the dharma attached to the conception of Imperialism did not aim at the propagation of a particular sect. Religious sentiments played an inspiring role in the expansion of medieval Europe and Asia. The growing impact of the Islam and the Christianity followed the expansion the medieval empires. Conquest of Alexander the Great also had an idea of propagating Greek ideas and

[21] The Vakatka-Gupta Age, 365-66.

culture. Even the European Imperialism in modern times followed the same path. But Ancient India was an exception. Hindu polity had no object like that. Unlike the Christian and Mohammadan rulers, the Hindu kings had been advised by scriptures to respect the culture, traditions, customs and the administrative institutions of the conquered region. The subjects of the conquered region were to be treated as subjects of the conqueror himself. Manu regulates that the traditions of the conquered state should be respectfully maintained and people should be given equal treatment to those of victorius state.[22] Yajnavalkya advises the king not to override the traditions, customs and conventions of the conquered people.[23] Vishnu-Dharma Sutra also supports this view.[24] Thus the state in Ancient India, though not secular in the strict sense of the word, allowed a complete cultural and spiritual

[22] Pramanari cha kuruit tesham
dharmayanyathoditan
Ratnescha pujayedenam
pradhhanaphrushaih sah

Manusmriti, 7-203.

[23] Yajnavalkya, 1.342-43.

[24] Vishnu Dharma Sutra, 3.42 and 47-49.

freedom which is aimed at by a modern secular state.

The Hindu State, although aiming at the promotion of *dharma*, was not a theocratic one. Theocracy means the rule of priests or final authority of the priests in the statal affairs. The priest is, in theocracy, the actual sovereign of the state like Pope and *Khalifah*. The Pope once used to exercise all the powers and authority over any Christian king. Pope himself was a direct political head of a state. He was to recognize the king. Similarly, *Khalifah* was also *defacto* master of an empire. Moreover, all the Muslim emperors were supposed to be obedient to the *Khalifah*. They were supposed to gain permission from the *Khalifah* at the time of their coronation. The Pope and *Khalifah* could interfere in affairs of the state and the decree of the Pope claimed more validity and authority than that of the king. It, sometimes, resulted in a conflict between the state and the church in later medieval Europe. The consent of the Pope, however, over political matters was an ordinary custom of the day and a king was expected to maintain the papal support. The king was master only of physique but the Pope was master of physique and soul both. The

Pope used to declare decrees on various matters and the church was paid regular taxes by its followers. Similarly, the *Khalifah* was also regarded as emperor of all the musalmans on the earth and every muslim king was servant of the *Khalifah*. The muslim king was supposed to be a viceroy of Him. The subjects, believing in a religion other than Islam, were treated as second class citizens. They were given neither prestige nor the facilities provided for the muslim subjects. The state or the Sultan often forced their subjects to accept Islam. War-prisoners had no other way except accepting Islam or death. The non-muslims subjects had to pay some religious taxes like Zaziah, pilgrimage tax etc. But the Hindu kings or state never adopted such practices. 'The monarch', claims Sri Aurobindo, 'might personally found a particular sect or creed and his state might evidently have a considerable propagandist influence, but at the same time he was bound to respect and support in his public office all the recognised religions of the people with a certain measure of impartiality, a rule that explains the support extended by Buddhist and Brahmin Emperors to both the rival religions. At times there were, mainly in the

south, instances of petty or violent state persecutions, but these outbreaks were a violation of Dharma due to momentary passion at a time of acute religious ferment and were always local and of a brief duration. Normally there was no place in the Indian political system for religious oppression and intolerance and a settled state policy of that kind was unthinkable.'[25]

The Hindu state was not theocratic in this sense. There can be no doubt that the Hindu state was to follow the path shown in the *dharmasastras* as muslim states were to work according to *sariyet*. But the *dharmasastras* or *smiritis* were not religious in the sense the Islamic or Christian scriptures were. They were codes of law—*Samhitas*—dealing with the working of the individual, society and state. State is never advised to spread any religion by force. The king was advised to treat all the subjects equally whatever their faith might be. Even the conqueror king was directed by *dharmasastras* to respect the traditions, customs and conventions of the subjugated territory.

[25] Foundations of Indian Culture, p. 374.

Moreover, the king was not supposed to be a religious head like *Khalifah* or Pope. He was not viceroy or representative of the chief priest. Hinduism had no organization and legal heads as envisaged by Islam and Christianity or Buddhism. Only Ashoka issued decrees to maintain discipline in Bauddha Sangha. But his orders were meant only for Buddhist monks. Hindu and other non-Buddhists were never interfered in their religious affairs.

We find minor references suggesting kshtriya-brahmin struggle. But there was no priest like Pope to claim that the king should be appointed with his approval. And gradually the king freed himself from theocratic machines. Kautlya boldly declared that the decree or order of the king was more authentic than any other regulation.[26] The king was always supposed to work in accordance with the spirit of *dharmasastras* but he was not to be directed by any other person or organisation.

The state in Ancient India was thus neither theocratic nor secular. It was a cultural state.

---

[26] Dharmesch vyavahareshu chritram rajashashanam. Vivadarthschatuspadah paschimah purvabadhakah.

Arthasastra, 3.1.

We cannot understand the true nature of the Ancient Indian state in the western terminology which is rooted in an essential dualism. The culture comprises of spiritual as well as material elements. The Hindu state was thus the political front of Hindu culture.

The absolutism of Hindu state was thus altogether different from that of Hegel. The German philosopher defined the state as a 'form of the absolute spirit, which is the essence of all things.' 'The state is the absolute power on the earth.' 'The state is the divine will.' But the absolutism of Hindu conception does not yield dharma to the state. State is an instrument to uphold *dharma.* It is not *dharma* in itself. The state, according to Hindu theory, neither creates law nor can discuss or violate it. On the contrary, nothing is supreme to Hegelian state. Dr. Beniprasad is right when he concludes, 'There is one fundamental difference between Hegelianism and Hindu Political Thought. The latter will not subordinate the fundamental law to the state or to the government. But when after postulating this condition, the Hindus embark on the glorification of the sovereign power, they leave

even Hegel far behind. The government claims all loyalty. It is the incorporation of the absolute, a super-personality which absorbs the real, living personality of men and women.[27]

[27] The Theory of Government in Ancient India, p. 345.

Chapter 3

Character of Government

Character of Government

People are generally of the opinion that India imagined and practised only one sort of government and that was monarchy. But monarchy or kingship as such was a later development. The spirit of democracy was not altogether unknown to Indian mind in Ancient times. It was rather a precedessor to the monarchy. The references to the Social Contract theory in Brahmin and Buddhist literature are enough to prove the democratic methods of the Hindus. Either the king was elected by the people or appointed with the consent of the people—it leaves no doubt that the king was not imposed upon them.

But we must not be over enthusiastic to emphasize the republican character of Indian polity. There is a school of scholars headed by K.P. Jayasawal that defines Hindu democracy in modern terminology. This is nothing but misunderstanding the true character of republican elements in Ancient India. We, at first,

must agree that there was no democracy in modern sense in Ancient India. It was a form of oligarchy because only a particular class was authorised to interfere with political and administrative affairs. It will be something improper if we evaluate the institution of a remote past on the basis of modern standards on which even the modern ones have reluctantly agreed. 'Indian scholars have attempted,' remarks Sri Aurobindo, 'to read the modern ideas and types of democracy and even a parliamentary system into the past of India, but this seems to me an ill-judged endeavour. There was a strong democratic element, if we must use the western terms, in Indian polity and even institutions that present a certain analogy to the parliamentary form, but in reality these features were of India's own kind and not at all the same thing as modern parliaments and modern democracy. And so considered they are a much more remarkable evidence of the political capacity of the Indian people in their living adaptation to the ensemble of the social mind and body of the nation than when we judge them by the very different standard of western society and the peculiar needs of its cultural cycle.'[1]

[1] Foundations of Indian Culture, p. 367.

The formation of government in earlier India was a political development of the peculiar social organization of the Ancient Hindus. The Aryans were a tribal race and the *Kula* constituted its basic unit. It was a petriarchal society and the oldest male member was head of this *Kula*. This head was empowered to work on behalf of the *Kula* and all the other members could not disobey his orders. His opinion was opinion of the whole *Kula*. This *Kula* was a social as well as a political unit. It was the basic unit of both types of governments prevailing in India—monarchy and republics. Both the systems continued to exist in Ancient India for a longer duration. The *Vishah* was originally an assembly of the heads of these *kulas* to administer the tribe. On the other hand, the king was also elected by these heads. We find various references to the election of the king in the literature of Ancient India. Rigveda speaks of a king elected by *vishah*.[2] Atharvaveda also refers to the election of the king, subjects (*vishah*) elect you to govern.[3] It

[2] Ta Im visho no rajanam brinanam
bibhatsavo upa uritradatishthan.
Rigveda, 10.124.8.

[3] Twam visho vrimtam rajyay
twamimah pradishahpanchdevih.
Atharvaveda, 3.4.20

also tells that the king was elected by a body of selected persons of all families.[4] Adiparva also speaks of the election of king Janmijaya after the death of Parikshta.[5] But the long list of the successive rulers of various dynasties in Puranas prove that the kingship gradually became hereditary. The son of the king *raja-putra*, or the influential member of the royal dynasty was accepted as kings. And people did not look elsewhere to find out a king. The expansion of territory or the military necessities and the influence of the late king were perhaps the causes that led the institution of kingship towards hereditary succession. But it must not be overlooked that the people had the final say in the election or selection of the king in Vedic times. There are various references in Vedic Literature to indicate the return of the exiled kings which prove that even the king could be exiled. 'Royal powers', writes V.M. Apte,' 'was, it is true, gradually consolidating itself but even a long and unbroken descent could not save a king from the wrath of his

[4] Ye rajano rajkritah sutak gramanyasch. ye
upasteen parna mahyam twam
sarvan krinvabhito janam.
Ibid., 3.5.7.

[5] Adiparva, 44.6.

subjects. For example, the srinjayas expelled their king Dushtaritu paumsayana from the kingdom, in spite of his ten generations of royal descent.[6] It is also noteworthy that the popular assemblies like *'sabha'* and *samiti*—whatever their nature and functions might be—exercised an effective control over the king. Atharvaveda refers to the king reciting the prayer 'May the *samiti* and *sabha*, the two daughters of Prajapati, concurrently aid me.[7] Attention must be paid to the fact that these public assemblies are daughters of Prajapati who empowers the king to govern. 'It is signficant to note that this passage describes the public Assemblies as issues of the same Prajapati from whom the king, according to the theory of his divinity, derives all his power and authority. Thus both monarchy and popular assemblies are placed on the same footing as divine institutions according to *Satapatha Brahmana*.'[8] We may, here, well envisage the cause that established the sanctity of the popular culture and customs and forbade the conqueror to destroy the traditions and institutions of the subjugated region.

[6] The Vedic Age, 432.33.

[7] Atharvaveda, 7.12.

[8] The Vedic Age, p. 433.

It is, therefore, not strange that both monarchy and republics continued to work simultaneously for a long period in Ancient India. The republican states are referred to in *Mahabharata*, *Panini*, *Arthasastra*, Pali literature, greek sources and the epigraphic and numismatic evidences of Ancient India. Although we witness the existence of republican states upto Gupta period, they ceased to have a major position in Indian politics after the invasion of Alexander the Great. The aggressive policy of the Magadha empire weakened these republics. Even then they were strong enough to have a courageous and appreciable fight against the victorious armies of the Greek invader. But this invasion made the Indian mind to feel the pressure for a United Empire to protect the country from foreign attacks. This was executed by the sway of Chandragupta Maurya under the guidance of Kautlya. The republican states, in such a system, had to satisfy themselves with a minor position. 'India especially after the invasion of Alexander felt the need of a movement of unification and the republics were factors of division : strong for themselves, they could do nothing for the organisation of the peninsula, too vast indeed for

any system of confederation of small states to be possible—and indeed in *the ancient world* that endeavour nowhere succeeded, always it broke down in the effort of expansion beyond certain narrow limits and could not endure against the movement towards a more centralised government. In India as elsewhere it was the monarchical state that grew and finally held the field replacing all other forms of political organisation. The republican organisation disappeared from her history.'[9]

The monarchy was thus not the only form of government that earlier Indian mind envisaged, though it, by and by, became more predominating. The conception of the divinity of the king thus does not stand true and convincing. It, therefore, was the *institution* of kingship, and not the king in person, that was treated as divine by Hindu political thinkers. Divinity of the king is nowhere mentioned. There are some hymns which, some scholars opine, suggest that the king has divinity in himself. Dr. Upendra Ghoshal holds the view that the king was regarded divine in Rigvedic times. He refers to the statement of Trasadasyu : 'I am Indra, I am Varuna......on me (the gods)

[9] Foundations of Indian Culture, 371-72.

bestow those principal energies (that are) characteristic of Asuras.'[10] The *Satapatha Brahmana* declares the rajanya as 'the visible representative of Prajapati"; hence while being one he rules over many.'[11] Manusamhita states that 'the Lord created a king for the protection of this whole creation, taking (for that purpose) eternal particles of *Indra*, of the *Vayu*, of *Yama*, of the Sun, of *Agni*, of *Varuna*, of the Moon, and of the lord of Wealth (*Kubera*).'[12]. *Agnipurana* says that as the king performs the duties of the Sun, the Moon, *Vayu*, *Yama*, *Varuna*, *Agni*, *Kubera*, the Earth and *Vishnu*, he (king) has particles of all these gods within him.[13] The supporters of the theory of divinity of kings refers to *Matasya Purana*[14], *Vayu Purana*[15], *Markandeya Purana*[16], *Santi Parva*[17], *Bhagavata Purana*[18] and *Sukranitisara*[19] to sup-

---

[10] Rigveda, 4.42.
[11] Satapatha Brahmana, 5.3.3.12.
[12] Manusamhita, 7.3.4-7.
[13] Agnipurana, 226. 17-20.
[14] Matasyapurana, 226. 9-12.
[15] Vayupurana, 57.72.
[16] Markandeyapurana, 27. 21-26.
[17] Santiparva, 67.4.
[18] Bhagavatapurana, 4.14.26-27.
[19] Sukranitisara, 1.73-79.

port this view.

But we must not forget that these thinkers were speaking of the institution of kingship and not of an individual king. The same *Sastras* supply ample testimony to prove that the king was a servant of the people. Baudhayana says that the king was to protect his subjects, receiving as his salary a sixth part of their grains.[20] It is clearly stated in Santiparva that the king may be punished if he does not follow tha path of *dharma.* 'That king' says Vasudev, 'who follow the advice of a vicious and sinful minister becomes a destroyer of righteousness and deserves to be killed by his subjects with all his family.'[21] This clearly implies that the king was not considered a god as the gods could not be punished. Kautlya opines that 'never shall a wicked and only son be installed on the royal throne.'[22] Kamandaka declared that a virtuous king was a part of gods and a wicked king was that of the demons. The Hindus always looked at gods as persons and, therefore, imposed the godly attributes to man. The king

[20] Baudhayan Sutra, 1.18.1.

[21] Asatpapisthshachivo vadhyo loksya dharmah;
Sahaiva parivaren kshipramevavaseedati.
Santiparva, 92.9.

[22] Arthasastra, 39-40.

is nowhere absolutely declared as god or incarnation of god. We must not forget that many of the *avataras* are not kings. The most that we may agree upon is the view that the Hindus equated the functions and attributes of gods to those of king : hence the king was equated to the gods. 'The king is a part of gods' is a symbolic statement which implies that the attributes of gods can be or should be found in a king. It does not mean that the king is divine. Destruction and expulsion of kings obviously indicate that no individual king was divine. It was the institution of kingship—the representative of the state—that was considered divine and the king was to acquire divine attributes when installed in the kingship with an oath to perform all the duties and functions of kingship righteously. The king, otherwise, was punishable. The Hindus had a tendency for personification of attributes. This resulted into development of various gods. It obviously and naturally led towards the statements speaking of the king as exercising functions of Indra, Kubera, Varuna etc. It never implies that the king-in-person was in any way divine. 'To argue from it that the king was divine or to say that since every religious ceremony meant the identification of the wor-

shipper with his god, the performer of a *rajasuya* became Indra (as says Mr. Ghoshal) is to carry scholarship to absurdity .'[23]

Moreover, the Hindu conception of the Social Contract theory and election of the king are enough to make us believe that earlier Indian mind did not over-emphasized the significance of any individual king. The Ancient Hindus made their institutions sacred and it was only by one's installation in these institutions that a person could acquire those godly attributes which were essentially attached with the sacredness of the concerned institutions. We may see that the king was always particularly careful to gain the popular consent since the Rigvedic period. The thinkers, who declared the king a representative of Prajapati, also made the popular assemblies, like *Sabha* and Samiti, two daughters of the same and the king's decisions were considered as subjects to popular approval. The divinity of kingship means that the king is divine by birth, that he is supreme authority, that he cannot be challenged. But the Hindus did not look at the king himself as god—what to say only of royal birth. The institution of king-

[23] The Ideas of Sovereignty and State in Indian Political Thought, p. 49-50.

ship elevated the king to the rank of the gods; it did not transform him into a god. The divinity thus was only a characteristic of king's office and not a property of his own. The earthly origin of the king is never overlooked and he is never treated as divine by virtue of his birth.

Besides it, superiority of *danda* has been repeatedly referred to in the Brahmanical literature. Manu declares that the *danda* 'strikes down the king who swerves from his duty, together with his relatives.'[24] Had the Hindus believed in the divinity of the individual king, they would have not emphasized on the proper training of the king. Kautlya and other political thinkers prescribe a detailed programme for the education and training of the would-be-king. It clearly implies that the king was subject to human weaknesses and errors and this training was an attempt to make him more capable of holding *danda*. A divine king neither needs training nor is subject to human weaknesses and errors.

Mr. U. N. Ghoshal infers[25] from some

[24] Dando hi Sumahttejo durdharaschakritatmabhiha;
Dharmaduichalitam hanti nripameva sabandhavam.
Manu, 7.28.

[25] History of Hindu Political Theories, p. 27.

hymns of the Satapatha Brahman that performance of *Rajasuya* and *Vajapeya* sacrifices transforms the king into god. The sacrifices, no doubt, had a divine significance and the king, after performing them, might have been equated with some gods. But the king himself was not considered divine. It is not insignificant that Satapatha Brahman, having established the divinity of king (as Mr. Ghoshal takes it), declared : 'The king is indeed the upholder of the sacred law for he is not capable of all and every speech, not of all and every deed.' Mr. Panikkar refutes the theory of Mr. Ghoshal when the former argues that......all Hindu worship is based on the idea of *tadatmya*, that is the worshipper becoming identified in mind with the worshipped. The idea of communion with God is in Hinduism nothing less than the identification of one's ownself with God. That is the broad principle of Hindu worship enshrined in the '*mahavakya* of *tatvamasi* and practised every day by worshippers through different mantras. It is as illogical to say that everyone thereby assumes divinity as it is to hold the king who by *Rajasuya* desires the power and attributes of Indra as protector and assumes *tadatmya* with his claim to be Indra

himself.'[26]

Dr. Bhandarkar also suggests that the kings assumed divinity by adopting the titles of gods. He recites the example of the Gupta kings who called themselves *Param daivata* etc. 'Param daivata can signify supreme deity only and it cannot possibly be doubted that they took themselves to be identified with the Supreme Being.'[27] We may trace its origin in the earlier Veda when Trasadasyu exclaims : 'I am Indra, I am Varuna.'[28] Such statements, in actuality, are expressions of personal vainty and not based upon any sound political theory. The *Param daivata* of the Gupta king is connotative of 'Paramount Lord' and not of 'supreme deity'. The vast literature, written in Gupta period, nowhere claims the divinity of the king. Gupta kings were staunch followers of Bhagavata sect and, therefore, could not treat themselves as absolute god. The court-poet Kalidasa, as Panikkar points out, nowhere identifies Gupta kings with gods : Kalidasa, whom many people ascribe to the Gupta period,

[26] The Ideas of State and Sovereignty in Indian Thought, p. 44.
[27] Some Aspects of Hindu Polity, p. 164.
[28] Rigveda, 4.42.

Indian culture is also manifested. The office or the institution is held divine and the duties are performed by persons who act under the guidance and authority of the Supreme Dharma. The divine purpose is thus achieved by human agency. It is through the human agency that the gods attain their purpose. It is, therefore, implied that the Hindu political thinkers, in accordance with their cultural ideals, did not ignore the material life. They inspired to achieve divine ends also through polity and thus transformed the material institution of kingship into something divine.

Unlike his foreign co-travellers, the king in Ancient India was thus a human agency. He was in no way a super-human or super-natural power. The king in Ancient Egypt and Iraq possessed supernatural powers. The king is divine and held directly responsible only to God is a hebrew conception. Solomon exclaimed : Hear, therefore, O ye kings, and understand, for power is given to you of the lord and sovereignty from the highest.'[30] This conception infused itself into the Christian thought from where Roman people inherited it. Constantine was declared 'Bishop of Bishops' ; Esubius ex-

[30] Wisdom of Solomon, 6.8.

claimed : We do not instruct thee who hast been made wise by God. We do not disclose to the sacred mysteries, which long before any discourse of men, but though one common Saviour and the divine vision of himself which has often shown upon thee.' Emperor was looked upon as the 'law incarnate upon earth' in the medieval times. Fredrick II called his followers 'faithful Christians'. But we do not find such examples in the Ancient India. The king was never considered law incarnate. He himself was subject to law—*dharma*. Law was something supreme over the king. Similarly, the king was not regarded as one endowed with divine wisdom and authority. Indian thinkers, unlike Esubius, always emphasized on the utility of the directives to be followed by the king. These directives are detailed and comprehensive not losing sight of the minutest detail even of the most ordinary statal affairs.

The absence of divine power in king always checked the Hindu mind to advocate the absolutism of the king. It was the state, not the king, that was absolute. The king, unlike Louis XIV, was not state in Ancient India. He was only a limb, though a major one, of the body politic. The state was not a possession of the

king ; the king was a property of the state. The king, actually speaking, was not the master of his subjects. He was subject to his subjects. Subjects and state were not meant for king ; king himself was meant for the welfare of the subjects. The coronation oath is a document that undoubtedly presents the king as a property of the state. The coronation oath treats king. ship as a dedication of life for the cause of people. 'If I play thee (the oath) false' says the king 'may I loose all the merits of my religious performances and gifts, of my good deeds, my place, my life, even my progeny.'[31] Mahabharata States, 'I will constantly protect the *dharma* laid on earth by the Vedas in thought, word and deed ; I will fearlessly carry out the established laws in accordance with *dandaniti.* I will never act capriciously.'[32]

[31] Aitenaindrena mahabhisheken kshtriyam sapayitwaabbi shinchet. Sa cha bruyatsaha sraddhaya yancha ratrimajaye-aham yancha pretasmi tadubhayamannarena istapoortam me lokam sukritamayuyuha prajam vrimjeetha yadi te druhyayeyamiti..
Aitreya Brahman, 8.15.

[32] Pratijnancabhirohasva manasa
karmana gira palayisyamyaham
bhauman Brahma ityevamasakrit.
Yascatra dharma nitiyukto

(Contd. to the next page)

The king is, moreover, compared to a pregnant woman in Mahabharata : 'As the pregnant woman, even not carrying for those objects which she likes best, seeks the well-being of what she carries in her, so forth, should the king treat his subjects. A righteous king, O foremost one of the Kuru race, should always act in such a manner, as to sacrifice what he loves most for the sake of securing the well-being of his people.'[33] Mr. Altekar objects that no guarantee has been provided to treat the capricious and unrighteous king. But he forgets that in the same Santiparva Bhishma allows the subjects to destroy the unrighteous king : That king who follows the advice of a vicious and sinful minister becomes a destroyer of righteous-

---

(Contd. from previous page)
dandaniti vyapasrayeh
tamasamakh karishyami.
svavaso no kadacana.
Santiparva, 59. 107-8.

[33] Yatha hi garbhini hitwa
swam priyam mansoanugam ;
garbhasya hitmadhatte tatha
rajnapyasanshayam.
Vartitavyam kurusreshtha
sada dharmanuvartina ;
swam priyam tu parityajya
yad yallokahitam bhavet.
Santiparva, 56.45-46.

ness and deserves to be killed by his subjects with all his family. Indeed, he very soon meets with destruction.'[34] Mr. Panikkar thus rightly comments 'Everywhere the coronation is a *diksha*, a dedication. The crowned and annointed king is one whose life has become a *vrati*.'[35] *This conception of vrati made the* office of the king impersonal. The maintenance of *dharma* was the foremost duty of the king. He was supposed to be an ideal man who could be followed by his subjects The king needed performance of no other religious functions if he had followed the righteous path laid down by the Vedas. Welfare of people was his highest *tapasya*. *Rajdharma* was a part of the general scheme of Dharma meant for the king and having followed the former the king could claim to be a *tapas* in the philosophical sense of the word. The righteous king, says Mahabha— needed no sacrifices and other religious functions : *Rajdharma* was the highest

[34] Asatapishtha sachivo vadhyo
lokasya dharmah,
sahaiva parivaren
kshipramevavasidati.

Santiparva, 92.9.

[35] Ideas of State and Sovereignty in Indian Political Thought, p. 31.

the head of executive and judiciary. Dharma was the law or code and the king promised to act in accordance with it. But the regulation and interpretation of dharma were in no way within the orbit of king's jurisdiction. The legislative powers were not attributed to the king in Ancient India. He was only to uphold the righteous law and administer justice within the limits of *dharma*. The king in India, according to Dr. Radhakumud Mookerjee, 'was not the source of law but rather its support.'[37] He was not the owner of the land. The divine theory of kingship meant that the king was responsible only to God and his verdict was not less than the decree of God on earth. He was the state. He was the law incarnate. But this does not stand true with the Hindu theory of kingship. The king was obliged to follow the path laid down in the *sastras—dharma—*and they were to be interpreted by Brahmin scholars. The people were authorised to leave, dethrone or destroy the king if he was not possessing a righteous spirit. The king possessed absolute power in the administrative and judicial affairs when acting righteously. He was Commander-in-Chief of military forces. He was the chief

[37] Asoka, p. 67.

supervisor and controller of the administrative, judicial social, ethical and economic, machinery of the state. He received his powers directly from *dharma* and was responsible not to a lesser institution. The law or *dharma* was to be interpreted by Brahmins. But it does not imply that every Brahmin was authorised to do it. It could be interpreted only by the *Rishis* who, no doubt, were above all worldly affairs and had no personal interests—their lives being fully dedicated to the cause of *dharma*. Even in modern times, the constitution is interpreted by the Judges who are appointed by the state or government. On the contrary, the Ancient interpreters—the *rishis*—need no appointment by any king. They were regarded as authorities on *dharma*. It is, therefore, a wrong notion that the Brahmin caste *en bloc* was interpreter of *dharma*. It were only some selected persons who, by virtue of their knowledge and unselfishness, were authorised to interpret the sacred law. The king, otherwise, was free to execute his policies. Sri Aurobindo writes : He was in fact a limited or constitutional monarch, although the machinery by which the constitution was maintained and limitation effected differed from the kind familiar in European

king. But the ministers were appointed by the king at his discretion and could be dismissed at the same. But the decisions of the *rishis* were not less valid in Ancient India than that of the Supreme Court in modern times. There was no guarantee that the king would agree with the *rishis* or he would work accordingly. Although the objection is just but the king was expected to respect the Sacred Law and the verdict of the *rishis.* He would be unpopular and had to face the wrath of people if he cared not the verdict of the pious *rishis*, Besides it, there is no guarantee that a powerful government would in no case acquire totalitarian powers in its interests dismissing the popular constitution. No court or police can go against a dictator who has dismissed the constitutional working. Hitler acquired totalitarian powers by constitutional methods. The German Parliament vested in him all the powers of the state. Many constitutional governments fail and are replaced by the dictatorial ones. Nothing can be done if an all powerful ruler violates constitutional methods. It was, therefore, highly difficult to check the despotism of the king in Ancient times. Power and authority are properties of the state and whoever possesses them may become a despot. It

is true for the past as well as present and future. We cannot save ourselves from this risk. It is to be noted that even in modern times no guarantee can be given for the everlasting proper working of any constitution. It is the consciousness of the subjects and moral obligations of the ruler that enliven the constitution. Hence the king was to be trained accordingly and the people were to follow the four-fold path carefully. With the passing of time. the Hindu people lost their touch with the spirit of *dharma* and soon absolute monarchy came into existence. Although some cases can be recited to prove the existence of the rule of *dharma* in modern Hindu states, they are only exceptions. Here we are not to forget that Ancient thinkers suggested the way to deal with the king acting unrighteously. Mahabharata speaks of the revolution—the destruction of the unrighteous king, as a sacred duty. There are many references to many kings falling victim to public wrath in the *Sastras*. On the contrary, a righteous king was highly respected and deeply loved.

The king thus appears as the most effective part of the state. The personality of Indian king is, no doubt, a singular one not only in Ancient and medieval worlds but in modern

times also. The king was created for public welfare and it was the highest sacracment a king could do. The king was thus not only to look after law and order ; he was designed for a positive role by promoting material as well as spiritual intrests of the individual and society. 'The kingship', comments Sri Aurobindo,' thus constituted proved to be in effect moderate, efficient, beneficient, served well the purposes assigned to it and secured an abiding hold on the affections of the people.'[40]

Foundations of Indian Culture, p, 376.

Chapter 4

Abode of Sovereignty

is of special significance that while the other races of the world vested sovereignty in the king, in the Hindu thinkers did not locate it even with the state itself—what to say of an individual king. The Hindu theory of sovereignty was an altogether different conception from that of medieval or modern Europe. K.M. Panikkar has intelligently remarked : Sovereignty was to the Hindus a composite conception and the fact that the state had essentially an administering character tended to lessen the theoretical pretentions of Hindu sovereignty.'[1]

The political thinkers of Europe always emphasized upon sovereignty as the chief constituent of the state with population, territory and government. The Hindu thinkers, on the contrary, did not think of the sovereignty as a separate part of the state.The sovereignty, therefore, is not named separately in the *saptanga* theory of the state. The Hindu state, in no way, was absolute in the Hegelian sense of the word. The king has been described in Hindu scriptures as all-powerful but he was not sovereign in the sense Louis XIV was. The state or the king had no legislative powers. Dharma was the sovereign

[1] Indeas of State and Sovereignty in Indian Political Thought, p. 67.

to which the king and the state were solely responsible. Hence the *danda*—a symbol of *dharma*—had supreme authority over the king. Here we find some resemblance with the pluralistic conception of sovereignty of modern thinkers like Duguit and Krabba.

It will appear something contradictory on the surfacial level that the thinkers, who developed a conception of totalitarian state were also thinking in the pluralistic terms. But this contradiction is only seemingly and not a real one. We have elsewhere discussed it elaborately that there was a fundamental difference between the absolutism of Hegelian state and that of the Hindu one. Dr. Beniprasad has clearly pointed it out, 'The latter (Hindu state) will not subordinate the fundamental Law to the state or to the government,[1] This implies that only the political sovereignty was vested in the government and the legal one was not given to it.

This superiority of Law to state has also been advocated by Duguit in France and Krabba in Holland. Duguit holds the view that Law is beyond and free from the political organizations. It is made not on the basis of intuition or caprice but on the basis of facts and needs. It is

[1] Theroy of Government in Ancient India, p. 345.

Law that makes social unity and interdependability of men possible. Law is to be respected not for its statal origin but for the public will which is expressed through it. State is a political aspect of the social organisation. The French philosopher stands for the view that state is directed by Law ; Law is not directed by the state. State is meant for social welfare and not for sovereignty. The emphasis, therefore, should be laid on the duties of state instead of its rights and powers. The state thus becomes responsible to Law. Krabba also expresses the same views with some minor differences. He accepts the sovereignty only of Law. He thinks that power is not the main constituent of state. Krabba and like-minded thinkers thus place Law superior to the state. The Law thus becomes sovereign. Le Fur also argues that state is controlled by some external authority and that is Natural or Rational Law.

Hindu political thinkers, similarly, always held law or *dharma* superior to the state or government. The state, by no means, was a source of law. Had the Hindus believed in the absolute sovereignty of the state or the king like medieval Europeans, they would certainly have placed it beyond the reach of any

other institution as Hobbes and Hegel have done. Hindus placed *dharma* superior to any other institution whatsoever it might be. The Hindu state was thus subservient to Dharma. Even in modern democracies it is people who prefer a way of life, make a constitution and form a government in order to work accordingly to achieve their cultural ideals by following that particular way of life. Similarly, the Hindu thinkers developed a constitution—*dharma*—and the government, which is actually state for all practical purposes, was directed to function under the guidance and authority of Dharma. It has already been discussed in the previous chapters that the institution of state was supposed to uphold the sacred law and the theory of government and state was called *Rajdharma* in the Ancient India.

Sovereignty was not thus a property of king or government. It can be understood well by an another approach. Sovereignty means the supreme power or authority that is not likely to be challenged and its decree or verdict is automatically treated as valid and constitutional. Nothing can be put beyond sovereignty. And this was not the case with the king or state in Ancient India. The king was not actually

sovereign as an authority was superior to him and that was authority of Dharma. He was not given even the right to interpret the regulations laid down by the *dharmasastras*. This right to interpretation of sacred law was vested in the pious *rishis*.

Legislation is a major characteristic of Administration in secondary affair. And the power of legislation was never granted to the king or state by ancient Hindu political thinke. The king was neither to enact a law—theocrati or secular —nor to interpret it. He was only an administrative and judicial head. He could issue only executive decrees not ignoring the spirit of *dharamsastras*. The sovereignty could not be ruled over and it was only *dharma* that could never be overruled by any body including the king or the state. Dharma was by all means beyond the king who could not encroach upon it.[3] Sri Aurobindo states, 'A greater sovereign than the king was the Dharma, the religious, ethical, social, political, juridic and customary law organically governing the life of the people. This impersonal authority was considered sacred

[3] Taddhatra sreyorupaniatyasrijat dharma.
Tadetatkshtrasya kshtram yaddharmah.
Tasmaddharmatpranam.

Satapath Brahman, 1.1.14.

and eternal in its spirit and the totality of its body, always characterstically the same, the changed organically and spontaneously brought about in its actual form by the evolution of the society being constantly incorporated in it, regional, family and other customs forming a sort of attendent and subordinate body capable of change only from within,—and with the Dharma no secular authority had any right of autocratic interference..... The king was only the guardian, executor and servant of the Dharma, charged to see its observance and to prevent offences, serious irregularities and breaches.'[4]

The king—head of the state and government—was thus authorised only to administer the *dharma*. He was a servant. He had no authority of direct legislation. Formation of law was not within the scope of state-activity.

The Hindu state, like the state of Duguit, thus remained something inferior to law. Duguit, as we have previously discussed, attempted to put the law beyond the state and made the latter a servant of the former. Similar views have also been expressed by the political philosophers of the Hindus. The coronation oath clearly states that the king was supposed to act in

[4] Foundations of Indian Culture p. 372-73.

accordance with the spirit of the *dharma* and he was not expected to act arbitrarily. The *dharmasastras* also regulated the foreign and imperial policy of the state and the king was obliged to function accordingly. Suppression of the subjects of the defeated states and humiliation of their customs and cultural traditions was emphatically negated by the Hindu thinkers.

The *danda* thus become the symbol of sovereignty. It was the symbolic authority of the Dharma and *dharamsastras.* Rajdharma was also called *dandaniti.* The *danda* was sovereign also of the king. It is of special significance that the highest office of a system like monarchy was held liable to *danda* by the Hindu thinkers. The king was advised to respect *danda* and not to misuse it. The Danda had a divine power and, therefore, was a threatening to the king himself.[5] This view of Manu has also been supported by Yajnavalkya[6]. Such writers evidently meant that the king should not act capriciously. He was to perform his duties consti-

[5] Dangohi sumahttejo durdhar—
schaakritatmabhih
Dharmadvichalitam hanti
nripameva sabandhavam.
Manu, 7.28.

[6] Yajnavalkya, 1.354-56.

tutionally. He was trustee of this divine institution and trustee can, naturally, never be sovereign. The sovereign is the authority or document that makes the king function according to itself. And that was Law or Dharma.

It does not mean that the king had nothing to do with legislation. Administration is a complex affair and every law or by-law is not likely to be discussed or enacted in the *dharmasastras.* The king, therefore, was left free to issue executive orders and enact regulations for the proper functioning of the state. But these decrees and regulations were supposed to be in accordance with the Sacred Law or Dharma. 'If a ruler administers justice in accordance with the general law of duty, the accepted moral principles of the cultured society, in accordance with the prescription of definite law of procedure, the approved usage of a social group or locality, and the principle of equity as the fourth, he can conquer the earth extending as far as to the four seas'[7]. Sukra also empowers the king to declare decrees in accordance with *dharma* and popular customs.

[7] Anusasadhi dharma
uyavaharen samsthaya.
nyayen cha chathurthena
chaturantam mahim jayet.

There has been much discussion regarding the superiority of king's decrees to Dharma. Prof. Rangaswami Aiyanger and Dr. R. K. Mookerjee opine that the king was not free to make new laws. They quote Kautlya, Yajnavalkya and Narada in their support. Mr. B. M. Barua and others, on the other hand, refute this view by reinterpreting the same *slokas*. But this discussion leads nowhere. The king was, no doubt, left free to enact laws over the matters upon which the *rajdharmasastras* remained silent. But the king, in no case, was authorised to go against the spirit and intention of *dharma*. Dharma was always held superior to the king. The social traditions and popular customs were also to be esteemed. Even the conqueror king was advised by Yajnavalkya[8] and others that traditions, conventions and customs of conquered region were to be respected and followed. This implies that no regulation was to be enacted against the customs of the people. Many guilds and corporations, therefore, always exercised autonomous powers. Manu laid down that whatever might have been practised by the virtuous and the twice-born men as are devoted to the law, that only the king should establish

[8] Yajnavalkya, 1.342-43.

as law if it be not opposed to the laws of castes, communities, guilds and families.[9] This theory can fairly be compared to that of Bosanquet that 'the work of the state is *defacto* for the most part 'endorsement' or 'taking over'—setting its imprimature, the seal of its force, on what more flexible activities or the mere progress of life have wrought out in long years of adventurous experiment or silent growth[10]'.

The ultimate sovereignty was thus vested in the public. Dharma was a symbol of the will of the people. It must be clearly understood that *dharma* and other popular institutions were given equal footing. This implies that Hindu thinkers placed the public superior to the king. Moreover, the king was not directed to act in accordance with a particular *dharmasastra*. Vedic Law is a wide term which includes practically all the brahmanical *sastras*. This means

[9] Jati jananpadandharmansrenidharanscha
dharmavati; Samikshya kuldharmanch
swadharma pratipadayet.
Sadbhirachritam yatsyadbharmikaischa
dwijatibhih; Taddeshkulajateena—
maviruddham prakalpayet.

Manu, 7.41 and 46.

[10] Philosophical Theory of the State, Introduction XXXIII.

that the king was expected to act according to the established law accepted by the people as he had been positively directed to respect the traditions of families, castes and communities. The sovereignty was thus vested in the public who handed it over to the king with the condition that he will act according to *dharma* and not arbitrarily, failing in which he could be derecognized. The scholars even like H. M. Barua has to agree : 'In all the monarchical states of Ancient India but those in which the reigning monarch happened to be a reckless, ruthless, and incorrigible tyrant, political sovereignty theoretically inhered in the impersonal authority of Dharma and actually belonged to the ruled, the subjects or the people at large who were the real beneficiaries of the state.'[11]

The thesis that the ultimate sovereignty was enjoyed by public is objected by some scholars on the ground that neither any control could be exercised over the king nor was there any constitutional provision to dethrone him. It is an open fact that a sufficient control over the king or government was exercised the interpreters of law. H. C. Raychaudhari has been

[11] Asoka and His Inscriptions, p. 140-41.

convinced that the *Brahmins* and *Sramans* exercised an effective control over the king. Secondly, the village headmen could also influence the government as the king usually took advice from them. Thirdly, the council of ministers had enough control over administration and policy both. Although the king could ignore the ministers, he was advised generally to accept the opinion of *mantriparishad*.[12] And it must be agreed upon that direct control over the government could be exercised nowhere in Ancient and medieval world. It is somewhat feasible only in the modern times.

It is of no lesser significance that Ancient Indian political thinkers empowered the subjects to revolt against the unrighteous king. There was no peaceful procedure to dethrone the king but 'the popular will ultimately prevailed in Ancient India and (that) it was expressed in extraordinary circumstances, no matter how.'[13] We should not overlook the fact that even in modern times constitutional means are applicable only with the governments which respect

---

[12] Tatra yadbhuyisthah karyasiddhe-
karam va bruyustatkuryum.

Arthasastra, 1.6.

[13] Asoka and His Inscriptions, p. 145.

the constitution. Can the dictators, who had no respect for any sort of constitution, be dethroned through any constitutional procedure ? Similarly, the king, having no respect for the sacred law, could not be dethroned by any constitutional method. Revolution or rebellion as the final weapon is approved by *dharmasastrakaras*. Bhishma declares, 'The king who follows the advice of a vicious and sinful minister becomes a destroyer of righteousness and deserves to be killed by his subjects with all his family. Indeed, he very soon meets his destruction.'[11] Manu and Yajnavalkya also support the dethronement of unrighteous kings. Ever since the Vedic times, various practical examples like those of king Dushtaritu Pakmsayana and Vena prove it.

This evidently implies that the ultimate sovereignty, although not in a modern sense, was vested in the subjects at large and the will of the state, expressed through govermental activities, was ultimately public will.

[11] Santiparva, 92.9.

Chapter 5

Citizen and the State

The all-pervasive scope of state-activity provokes a question : Were the rights of the individual guaranteed in such a system ? Could the individual enjoy any sort of liberty in a totalitarian type of state ? The problem is a major one for the standard of a culture is measured by the rights it gives to an individual. The conception of individual liberty has played an extra-ordinary effective role even in the political thinking of present day. Democracy is actually an outcome of the conception of individual liberty.

. The question of liberty and rights of the individual is a result of a particular bent of mind. The western mind defined the things always in essentially dualistic terms and saw a gulf between the objectives of the two. It can be exemplified well by the form a problem acquires in the western mind. It always takes a problem with a dualistic attitude like materialism *versus* spiritualism, individual *versus* society etc. This *versus* is a special phenomenon of

western mind. It establishes that the individual and the state are two extreme ends having separate interests which cannot be synthesised. It is, therefore, not strange that the state was considered 'a necessary evil' by the western mind.

The Hindu era admittedly had a spiritual bent of mentality. The Hindu mind recognized the difference between the two—the individual and the society or the individual and the state—but it saw no permanent conflict between them. The Hindus had an insight to realise the basic unity of the two and were convinced that a harmony could be established between them. Unlike the westerners, they had no liking for *versus*. They, therefore, could not envisage a problem like individual *versus* state. They could think it only in the terms like 'individual and the state' and this 'and' is undoubtedly different from *versus*.

The Hindu state, naturally, was not a 'necessary evil, ; it was a 'necessary benefactor'. The conception of individual liberty as such could not be a major problem of political thinking for them. They had no presuppositions of the possibility of the suppression of the individual and, therefore, no pretentions were made

to secure the rights of the individual. On the other hand, political philosophers of Ancient India did not discuss the rights of the state. They prescribed only duties leaving apart any sort of rights of state as well as of individual and we can only infer from these duties what rights could be enjoyed by them. And a close scrutiny of these duties make us believe that individuality of a citizen was practically guaranteed though tendency towards anarchy was not to be accepted. We must have it in mind that 'salvation'—the chief goal of life—was absolutely an individual attainment and the state was meant to help in the achievement of this personal goal of the individual. This clearly implies that the right of the individual in essence was recognised by the state.

We have elaborately discussed the scope of state-activity in Ancient India. It has been clearly shown that the state was not a negative institution to the Hindu thinkers. It was not only a 'hindrance to hindrances'. It had a positive attitude. No aspect of human life was beyond the sphere of state and it was supposed to promote material and moral life. The Hindu state was thus a welfare state.

But the all-pervasive powers did not make

it interfere into the personal lives of the citizens. The state took a keen interest in the matters pertaining to law and order and prepared an environment for a harmonious advancement of the individual and society. Dharma was supposed to be beyond state and the latter was expected to work in accordance with the former. The state thus protected and advanced the social system advocated by the Dharma. The liberty of the individual was a social rather than a political question. The state never interfered into the personal liberty of the individual to the extent it was guaranteed by the prevalent social system.

The totalitarian conception of the Hindu state is not totalitarian in the modern sense of the word. The totalitarianism which the modern world has been witnessing under Fascist and Communist governments could have never been approved by the political thinkers of Ancient India. The modern totalitarianism is an anti-intellectual movement because it prohibits free discussion and freedom of expression. The intellectuals of Fascist Italy were either imprisoned and murdered or exiled. Educational institutions were exploited for political propaganda. Teachers and scholars were many times

scrutinized by the governmental officials. The whole life of the people was controlled by the state. Individual liberty was by no means possible. This kind of totalitarianism also provokes the feeling of aggressive nationalism resulting in war. The state was a power-system and the orders of the dictator were not less than divine decrees. The state either became the rival of religion or utilized it for political purposes as Germany and Italy did during totalitarian regime. Nothing could be placed higher to the state—practically to the dictator. All types of totalitarian governments—leftist or rightist—have proved it well.

The Hindu state was not totalitarian in this sense. Dharma was undoubtedly superior to the state or the king. 'There could' comments Sri Aurobindo 'therefore be ordinarily little or no room in the ancient system for autocratic freak or monarchical violence and oppression, much less for the savage cruelty and tyranny of so common an occurrence in the history of some other countries.'[1] Social and religious life of the society was never controlled or guided by the state. The state in Ancient India never exercised any sort of control over the intellectual

[1] Foundations of Indian Culture, p. 375-76.

movements of the country. No thinker was ever exiled from the state—what to say of imprisonment or murder—on account of his philosophy. The various systems of philosophy developed without any external interference. It requires some more attention. The state was to maintain Dharma as laid down by the Vedas. But the philosophies which were admittedly anti-vedic also enjoyed an unchekered development. Even the kings, who had faith in Vedic Dharma, also made charity and donations to other sects and respected properly the men like Buddha and Mahavira who obviously opposed the authority of the Vedas. It thus becomes clear that the intellectual and religious life of the individual was, in no way, under the control of the state. The state was concerned only with the making of the environment which might promote the spiritual tendencies. It was not expected to exercise any control over intellectual and spiritual life of the individual. The spiritual life was placed within the scope of state-activity in the sense that the state was to create an atmosphere for harmonious—spiritual as well as material—development of human life. 'The religious liberties' writes Sri Aurobindo, 'of the commons were assured and could not normally

be infringed by any other secular authority ; each religious community, each new or long-standing religion could shape its own way of life and institutions and had its own authorities or governing bodies exercising in their proper field an entire independence.'[2]

Econonmic life of the individual was also not checkered by the Ancient Indian State. Thinkers like Kautlya empowered the state to have an effective control over certain trades and industries. But this control did not aim at the suppression of the individual liberty. Control over certain trades and industries is considered desirable even by modern democracies for the harmonious advancement of national economy. No liberty to individual can be guaranteed in case it goes against the collective interests of the society. Liberty of individual means liberty of all the individuals of society. Individual liberty cannot be guarnteed to the extent that it may become a hindrance to the interests of the other individuals. The Hindu State, therefore, was empowered to exercise enough control over the trades and industries so that sources of the society could not be used against itself. They should rather be used for the

[2] Foundations of Indian Culture, p. 373-74.

advancement of the whole society. But individual liberty was not suppressed for this purpose. Only the extremist view of liberty was not advocated. Economic rights of the people were protected by the guilds and corporations. These guilds—*srenis*—and corporations—*nigama srenis*—played an effective role in the economic life of Ancient Indian Society. These institutions enjoyed even the judicial rights in civic matters. 'The *srenis* will try the cases not tried by *kulas*, the *ganas* will try the cases left by the *srenis*.[3] These self-governing institutions could positively influence the governmental activity. We may fairly hold that the liberty of individual in economic matters might be guaranteed well by these institutions.

Revenue policy of the state was a problem over which Hindu political thinkers paid much attention. A detailed policy of taxation has been laid down by the *dharmasastrakaras* which was usually followed by the kings. One sixth of the grains was considered just and enough tax and the King was expected to respect this policy. Manu and Gautama were advocates of this view. But Bhishma permits the king to collect more levy in the time of danger. Sukra and Kautlya

[3] Sukra 4·5.

also support him. Kautlya advises the king to impose heavy taxes with the consent of the people. He forbids the king to repeat it.[4] The king was authorised to impose taxes fairly. He was to collect levy only on the articles prescribed by *Smiritis*. Taxes were to be imposed upon commerce and industry and not upon income. Sudden increase in the taxes was forbidden. Bhishma advises : 'the king should never impose taxes in a bad form and on persons who cannot pay them. He should impose them gradually and with mildness, in proper time and according to due forms.'[5] The State was thus controlled by the *rajdharmasastras* in its taxation policy. It thus becomes clear that the state could not exercise totalitarian power over the economic life of the individual.

The state thus had no direct control over the public and personal life of the citizens. The self-governing bodies like village-panchyats or caste-panchyats were meant to regulate the

[4] Sakrideva no dwih prayojyah.

Arthasastra, 5.2.

[5] Na chasthana na chakale,
Karamstebhyo nipatyet.
Anupuvyerna santven
Yathakalam yathavidhi.

Santiparva, 88.12.

social life of the individual. These panchayats were guardian of the civil and social rights of individual. Even the judicial powers were entrusted to the panchayats. Only the criminal cases were to be settled by the state. Civil suits were to be placed before the panchayats and its decisions were obligatory to the concerning parties. In the Chola empire, these village bodies acted as modern municipalities besides their judicial functions.

Apart form all these non-state institutions, the subjects were given the right to rebel against an unrighteous king or government. It is an extra-ordinary example in the history of political philosophy that the makers of law-*dharmasastrakaras* legalised the right to revolt against the unjust and arbitrary king. Sri Aurobindo, therefore, has rightly commented : The state did not interfere with the religious liberty or the established economic or social life of the nation ; it confined itself to the maintenance of social order and the provision of a needed supervision, support, coordination, and the facilities for the rich and powerful functioning of all the national activities. It understood too always and magnificently fulfilled its opportunities as a source of splendid

and magnificint stimulation to the architecture, art, culture, scholarship, literature already created by the communal mind of India[*]. The social, political and economic activities of life were aspects of Dharma and the state was obliged to act in accordance with it. The state thus could not encroach upon the rights of the individual preserved indirectly by the *dharma*. The state was actually a coordinator to exercise a general control over all the aspects within the limits of *dharma*. The right to self-determination was guaranteed to the guilds and communities and the state was expected to respect these institutions.

But it must not be ignored that right to equal opportunity was not granted to all the citizens. The peculiar caste system of the Hindu society. did not exempt political and economic systems. The social unequality resulted in the political and economic unequality. The king was advised either to exempt or to collect light taxes from Brahmins. The caste-system determined the vocation of the individual in general. Thus the individual liberty could not be fully enjoyed in Hindu state. But the state was not responsible for this system. It was only to maintain

[*] Foundations of Indian Culture, p. 408.

social law. It was not expected to go against the opinion of the society. It should also be noted that taxes were imposed lightly upon the Brahamins because they had no opportunity of amassing weath—like Kshtriyas and Vaisyas. The Vaisyas were not supposed to fight in war if they were not given the right to rule. It were only Sudras who, having no effective privilege, really suffered. They had no religious liberty; study of Vedas was prohibited for them.

But the position of Sudras was better if it is compared with their equals in the other states of the contemporary world. The Sudras were to be protected against any kind of unjustice done to them. We come across many stories in the Puranas which imply that the righteous Sudras were respected by all the twice-borns including even the Brahamins. The Sudras were not slaves as we find in ancient and medieval European countries. Even the modern democracies discriminate betweent man and man on the basis of caste, creed and colour. The Sudra in Ancient India was entitled to lead good and virtuous life. He was restricted from studying Vedas but Manu declared that he should be helped in other studies. We, therefore, cannot blame the Ancient Hindus too much

though it cannot be denied that the caste-system was a hindrance to the liberty of the individual.

We must here repeat that the polity was not responsible for this suppression of the Sudras. The state could only act according to the will of the people. Even in modern times no law can be put into practice without the will of the people. If the state initiates positively in modern times it is a result of the general awakening of the society. Even in the modern societies the right to individual liberty is denied either by totalitarian governments or by capitalistic methods. Theoretically, the state was not authorised to suppress the individuality and rights of a citizen. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan has rightly argued that the state was meant for the welfare of the individual ; it could not demand any sacrifice from him.[7] The state was authorised only to create the atmosphere in which it can achieve its aim—welfare of the individual.

The Hindu polity, with its limitations, was thus working to attain the ideals of culture envisaged by the *rishis*. The Dharma was not possible to achieve without *artha* and *kama* and the state aimed at material as well as spiritual

[7] Eastern Religion and Western Thought, p. 360.

value of life. All the activities of Hindu life were regulated by Dharma and political life was not an exception. This system of Dharma was meant for the personal salvation of the individual and the state was thus helping in material and spiritual attainments of individual and community both. The Hindus, thus, developed a cultural polity upon spiritual foundations that aimed positively also at material attainments. The political thinking in Ancient India constituted a part of a philosophy of cultural life for which the Hindus aspired.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Original Texts

Rigveda, samhita and pada text with Sayana's commentary. Edited by F. Max Muller.

—samhita translated by R. C. Dutt.

Yajurveda samhita.

Texts of the White Yajurveda Translated—Griffith.

Athervaveda samhita.

Atharvaveda (Translation)—Bloomfield.

Aitereya Aranyaka—Keith.

Aitereya Brahman.

Taittiriya samhita.

Brihadaranyaka Upnishad.

Chhandogya Upnishad.

Jaiminiya Brahmana.

Mundaka—Mandukya Upnishad.

Kema Upnishad.

Katha Upnishad.

Satapath Brahmana.

Ashtadhyayi Sutrapath—*Panini*.

Baudhayana Dharmasutra.

Asvalayan Grihya Sutras.

Vishnu Dharmasutra.

Mahabharata.

Ramayana.

Manu smriti.

Narad smriti.

Yajnavalkya smriti.
Vishnu dharmasastra.
Arthasastra (Kautlya) edited by Shamsastri.
Kamandaka nitisara.
Rajnitimayookh—Nilkanth.
Rajnitiprakash—Mitramisra.
Sukraniti.
Markendeya purana.
Vishnu purana.
Agni purana.
Mahavamsa.
Diggnikaya.
Diyavadan.
Jatakas.
Acharanga Sutra.
Raghuvamsa.
Sakuntalam.
Panchtantra.

2. Books on Hindu Polity

Aiyangar, Rangaswami K. V. ;
Some Aspects of Ancient Indian Polity.
Altekar, A. S. ;
State and Government in Ancient India.
Anjaria, J. J. ;
The Nature and Grounds of Political Obligations in the Hindu State.
Bhandarkar, D. R. ;
Some Aspects of Ancient Indian Polity.
Dikshitar, V. R. R. ;
Hindu Administrative Institutions.
Mauryan Polity.

Ghosal, U. ;

History of Public Life in Ancient India.

Hindu Revenue System.

A History of Hindu Political Theories.

Jayasawal, K. P. ;
Hindu Polity.

Kane, P. V. ;
History of Dharmasastra, Vol. III.

Law, N. N. ;

Aspects of Ancient Indian Polity.

Studies in Ancient Indian Polity.

Inter State Relations in Ancient India.

Mahalingam, T. V. ;

South Indian Polity.

Majumdar, R. C. ;
Corporate Life in Ancient India.

Mookerjee, R. K. ;

Local-self Government in Ancient India.

Nationalism in Hindu Culture.

Pratapgiri, R. ;

Problem of Indian Polity.

Pannikar, K. M. ;
Ideas of State and Sovereignty in Indian Political Thought.

Prasad, Beni ;
The State in Ancient India.
The Theory of Government in Ancient India.

Sen, A. K. ;
Studies in Ancient Indian Political Thought.

Sen Gupta, N.C. ;
Evolution of Ancient Indian Law.

Sinha, H. N. ;
Sovereignty in Ancient Indian Polity.

Vandhyopadhyay, N. C. ;
Development of Hindu Polity and Political Theories.

Verma, V.P. ;
Studies in Hindu Political Thought and its Metaphysical Foundation.

Visvanathan, S.V. ;
International Law in Ancient India.

3. Books on Ancient Indian History

Agrawal, V.S. ;
India as Known to Panini.

Aiyangar, P.T. Srinivas ;
Life in Ancient India.

Barua, B.M. ;
Asoka and His Inscriptions.

Bhandarkar, D.R. ;
Asoka.

Blunt ;
Caste-System in Ancient India.

Bhandarkar, R.G. ;
Vaishnavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems.

Basham, A.L. ;
Wonder That Was India.

Eliot, Sir Charles ;
Hinduism and Buddhism.

Ghoshal, U. ;
Studies in Indian History and Culture.

Keith, and Macdonell
Vedic Index.

Law, N.N. ;
Studies in Indian History and Culture.

Majumdar, R.C. ;
Ancient India.
Vedic Age (edited)
Age of Imperial Unity (edited)
Classical Age (edited)
Age of Imperial Kanauj (edited)
Struggle for Empire (edited)
Hindu Colonies in the Far East.
Vakataka—Gupta Age (edited with Altekar).

M'Crindle ;
Ancient India as described in Classical Literature.
Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian.

Metraux and Crouzet ;
Studies in the Cultural History of India.

Mookerjee, R.K. ;
Asoka.
Chandragupta Maurya and His Times.
Hindu Civilization.
Harsha.

Panikkar ; K.M. ;
A Survey of Indian History. .

Pargiter ;
Dynasties of the Kali Age.

Raychaudhari, H.C. ;
Political History of Ancient India.
Early History of the Vaishnava Sect.

Sastri, K.A.N. ;
Studies in Chola History and Administration.
Age of the Nandas and Mauriyas.

Tripathi R.S. ;
History of Kanauj.

4. General Works

Arnold, Mathew ;
Culture and Anarchy.

Ashirvadam, A.D. ;
Political Theory.

Aurobindo, Sri ;
Foundations of Indian Culture.
The Human Cycle.
On the Vedas.

Bosanquet, B. ;
Philosophical Theory of the State.

Coomarswamy, A.K. ;
History of Indian and Indonesian Art.

Dasgupta, S.N. ;
History of Indian Philosophy.

Devraj, N.K. ;
Culture : A Philosophical Interpretation.

Ghokhale, B.G. ;
Indian Thought through the Ages.

Laski, H.J. ;
Grammar of Politics.

Munshi, K.M ;
Indian Inheritance Vol. I and II.
Prabhu P.H. ;
Hindu Social Organization.
Ranade, R.D. ;
Constructive Survey of Indian Philosophy.
Radhakrishnan, S. ;
Indian Philosophy, 2 Vols.
Hindu View of Life.
Eastern Religion and Western Thought.
Sabine, G.H. ;
A History of Political Theory.

INDEX